1104.0 - CURF Microdata News, Jun 2007

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And the winner of the 100th CURF release is.......

The General Social Survey (2006)

On the 22nd June the General Social Survey (2006) became the 100th Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) to be released by the ABS. It was released in both Basic and Expanded formats on CD-ROM and in the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL).

The first CURF was produced from the National Health Survey and released by the ABS in 1985. The release of the General Social Survey CURF was celebrated by all the ABS staff who were involved in its creation and dissemination.

Stay tuned for three further CURFs expected to be released in August 2007.

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General Social Survey (2006) CURF

The General Social Survey (2006) Basic and Expanded CURF is now available and is proving popular with

researchers. This is the 100th CURF released by the ABS.

The CURF consists of both a person and voluntary work level containing confidentialised data on all persons 18 years or over. The data provides information on people's health, family relationships, social and community involvement, education, employment, income and financial stress, assets and liabilities, housing and mobility, crime and safety, transport, attendance at culture and leisure venues, and sports attendance and participation. The person level contains 13,375 records about each selected person and the household to which they belong. The voluntary work level contains 7,062 records about each selected voluntary work organisation for which the selected person engaged in voluntary work during the previous 12 months.

For more information visit the GSS 2006 CURF Information page.

Household Expenditure Survey CURF releases

Highly anticipated is the release of the 2nd Edition Household Expenditure Survey and Survey of Income and Housing (2003-04) Basic and Expanded CURF and the Household Expenditure Survey (1998-99), Third Edition Basic CURF. These three CURFs are expected to be released in August this year.

Technical papers for these CURFs and for all CURFs currently available from the ABS can be found by visiting the List of Available CURFs page.

Keep an eye out for upcoming CURF releases by visiting our list of Expected CURFs.

Visit the Published Research pages to view research papers and findings undertaken with these CURFs.

Managing CURFs: Step By Step

Written specifically for CURF Users, Contact Officers, Responsible Officers, and Consultants and their Sponsoring Organisations, this guide explains the roles and responsibilities of each and provides a step by step break down of the application process.

This guide does not cover every aspect of the CURF process and should be read in conjunction with the CURF microdata pages on the ABS website.

To view the guide select the link provided. Managing ABS Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs): A Step by Step Guide, 2007 (cat.no.1406.0.55.004).

Please email <microdata.access@abs.gov.au> for any further information.

Introducing Kim Farley-Larmour

A new Director is heading up the ABS Microdata Access Section: Kim Farley-Larmour worked outside the ABS in other Commonwealth agencies and also in the university sector before joining the ABS. She was previously the National Manager of the ABS Library Extension Program.

We also welcome Liliana Rojas and Pam Palmer to the team.

Paradise by the dashboard light

Which CURFs generate the most published output? What are the most popular CURFs? When is the best time to use the RADL? Find out by visiting the Microdata Usage Graphs on the CURF Microdata web pages.

These 'dashboard' style indicators have been designed to provide interesting information at a glance.

If there are other indicators that you would like to see, let us know by contacting <microdata.access@abs.gov.au>

Leaving your organisation?

Are you a CURF user who is about to move onto new pastures? If you are leaving your organisation, you must notify your organisation's CURF Contact Officer at least ten working days before your departure. Your are also required to return any copies of CURFs on CD-ROM. If you leave your organisation, you **must not** take copies of CD-ROMs with you, or continue to access CURFs via the ABS RADL.

More information on roles and responsibilities of all CURF users can be found in Managing ABS Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs): A Step by Step Guide, 2007 (cat.no.1406.0.55.004).

What's new and coming soon to RADL

An update to RADL was implemented on 29 June 2007. This upgrade provides some usability enhancements for RADL users, such as increasing the allocated memory in Stata.

The key element of this upgrade is that checks for the retention of ABS unit identifiers are now in place for all three languages supported in RADL. Automated checks for the retention of ABS identifiers have now been introduced. These checks in SPSS, SAS and Stata assist in ensuring that necessary unit identifiers are not inadvertently removed from ABS unit record datasets.

If a unit identifier is removed from a unit record file, users will experience the following:

In SAS:

Program will terminate as a Failed job, with a message appearing in the log file.

<ABS> ERROR: ABS ID variable ABSHID dropped from input dataset xxxx.xxxxx.
<ABS> ERROR: ABS ID variable ABSPID dropped from input dataset xxxx.xxxxx .
<ABS> ERROR: RADL pre-step dataset check failed. This job will now be aborted.

In SPSS:

Program will be terminated, with a message appearing in the log file.

The unit identifier field(s) ABSFID ABSHID ABSIID ABSJID
were dropped, contrary to RADL rules. This job will be stopped.

In Stata:

Program will continue to run, with unit identifiers being automatically retained. A message will appear in the output file.

ABS protection does not allow dropping of the following variable(s): ABSHID

In other RADL news, MASS is working forward implementing version 15 of SPSS and version 10 of Stata in the coming months. We welcome feedback about these changes to RADL as well as more general feedback on how we are doing, what you like and what you would like to see improved.

You can contact us at <radl@abs.gov.au>

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Innovation in Australian Business (2003) Expanded CURF : Specific conditions of use

When this CURF is released in early August 2007, there will be special conditions surrounding its use. As the Innovation CURF presents business rather than population survey data, the output for each job run using this CURF will be withheld prior to clearance.

Users are reminded that they can request ABS assessment of their output for clearance by following the steps contained in Chapter 6 of the Remote Access Data Laboratory User Guide, Version 4, March 2006 (cat.no.1406.0.55.002). Requests for clearance are typically assessed and users are advised of the outcome within three business days.

Please contact us at <microdata.access@abs.gov.au> for more information about this CURF or these conditions of use.

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CURF Microdata News is a quarterly newsletter created by the Microdata Access Strategies Section at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

CURF Microdata News is aimed at informing new and current Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) Microdata users about issues and developments in the access to, and use of, CURF Microdata. The newsletter periodically covers topics such as available and forthcoming microdata releases, terms and conditions of access, responsible access to microdata and best practice tips, pricing, microdata research outputs, frequently asked questions, and information about applying for ABS CURF microdata.

Interested readers are also invited to visit the CURF Microdata pages on the ABS web site for relevant up-to-date information about each of these matters, as well as all application forms.

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